

My name is Kristin Thomson. I'm a musician, an advocate, and a mediaconsumer. I am filing this comment because I am concerned about radio's commitment to localism.

Radio is a critical part of my life as a musician. However, the current radio industry is split into three distinct areas: commercial, non-commercial, and college. For most musicians, in fact the vast majority, airplay on commercial radio is wishful thinking. It's clear from looking at the charts and listening to the radio that almost all the music that's played on commercial radio stations has been promoted by the major labels. For bands on independent labels, airplay is relegated to college radio and, if you're lucky, some non-commercial stations.

I wonder how some of these commercial stations can call themselves "local" stations if they play nothing but what's hot on the nationwide charts in every city? Why aren't they willing to take risks, to break local bands? It's clear that the stations that DO take those risks are considered the "tastemakers" by the record labels.

Some of the stations in the Philadelphia area have added local band hours on the weekends within the past year. This is a good thing -- it gives these bands a chance to get some airplay, and creates interaction between the program and music directors and the local community.

While I am not in favor of placing restrictions on playlists, or forcing radio stations to play a certain percentage of "local" or "unsigned" material, I do think that the FCC should take a closer look at the effects of payola, which influences the decisions about what music gets played, as well as the prominence of national playlists, or whether stations are being programmed en masse by a small group of regional directors. Clearly, localism is not an issue in these station management decisions -- it's about becoming more competitive and more efficient. I urge the FCC to strike a balance between the needs of localism and competition, and not let economic factors outweigh the value of serving a community.

Thank-you

